

CATALOGUE NO. 6323.0

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TRADE UNION STATISTICS, AUSTRALIA 30 JUNE 1988

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MAIN FEATURES

At 30 June 1988, 308 trade unions were identified, with a total membership of 3,213,000 persons (an estimated 53 per cent of all employees). These figures represent an overall decrease of 8 unions and 27,100 members compared with June 1987, due primarily to the involvement of 8 unions in amalgamation proceedings and the deregistration of 2 others.

Of the 308 unions identified at 30 June 1988, 199 had less than 3,000 members, accounting for only 4.4 per cent of total union membership. The nine largest unions, which each reported membership of 80,000 or more, accounted for 34.4 per cent of total union membership.

Union membership in South Australia was the highest (277,800) for the State since the introduction of this publication in 1969. The apparent decrease in Northern Territory union membership from the previous year reflects approximately 900 Territory union members being reported in returns for affiliated unions in other States.

The female proportion of total union membership increased for the fourth consecutive year, to 34.9 per cent in June 1988.

The States with the highest proportions of employees reported as trade union members were Tasmania (60%), New South Wales (55%) and South Australia (55%).

NOTES

The trade union statistics are compiled from questionnaires completed by individual trade unions.

The statistics relate to trade union membership and state of operation.

Explanatory notes are published at the back of this publication.

IAN CASTLES
Australian Statistician

TABLE 1. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF SEPARATE UNIONS

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.(a)
31 December									
1983	186	174	138	141	146	123	75	92	319
1984	<u>190</u>	<u>179</u>	<u>138</u>	<u>142</u>	<u>148</u>	<u>127</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>329</u>
30 June									
1985	183	177	138	143	146	130	76	83	323
1986	182	176	141	144	147	135	78	87	326
1987	r178	r166	137	137	140	r130	r75	r78	316
1988	170	166	130	136	139	120	73	74	308

(a) Australian totals do not equal the sum of the States and Territories. See paragraph 3 of the Explanatory Notes.

TABLE 2. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF MEMBERS (' 000)

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
MALES									
31 December									
1983	730.6	529.1	299.6	174.3	162.2	61.1	13.9	36.4	2,007.2
1984	<u>741.4</u>	<u>545.5</u>	<u>300.9</u>	<u>171.5</u>	<u>166.2</u>	<u>62.2</u>	<u>13.6</u>	<u>40.0</u>	<u>2,041.2</u>
30 June(a)									
1985—Financial	660.0	488.3	283.3	161.0	148.9	57.5	11.1	37.2	1,847.4
Total	756.2	568.0	328.8	183.2	166.3	64.1	13.9	41.2	2,121.6
1986—Financial	664.4	527.4	270.6	162.1	152.4	60.9	11.4	42.9	1,892.1
Total	757.0	586.9	309.7	178.7	167.8	65.2	13.9	47.2	2,126.5
1987—Financial	673.6	515.8	260.5	166.2	152.1	61.9	11.6	38.7	1,880.5
Total	772.2	578.4	305.2	184.3	170.8	67.1	13.6	44.4	2,136.0
1988—Financial	666.8	505.7	259.9	164.6	152.3	56.7	10.1	34.9	1,851.1
Total	757.5	571.9	291.5	182.7	173.7	62.5	11.7	39.1	2,090.7
FEMALES									
31 December									
1983	378.1	259.1	130.6	83.5	75.3	27.6	6.7	17.2	978.0
1984	<u>373.1</u>	<u>260.5</u>	<u>133.9</u>	<u>87.0</u>	<u>78.0</u>	<u>29.1</u>	<u>6.8</u>	<u>18.9</u>	<u>987.3</u>
30 June(a)									
1985—Financial	357.0	269.0	113.7	85.7	74.4	29.4	7.0	19.2	955.4
Total	392.7	290.5	124.1	89.9	78.2	29.8	7.4	20.0	1,032.6
1986—Financial	357.0	277.6	123.6	85.8	80.8	28.8	6.2	18.7	978.4
Total	391.3	299.5	137.7	89.7	84.4	29.2	7.3	20.5	1,059.7
1987—Financial	400.4	279.1	139.0	82.1	76.3	28.9	5.9	16.9	1,028.7
Total	433.5	297.3	151.1	86.6	80.9	29.4	6.6	18.8	1,104.2
1988—Financial	383.7	289.3	132.5	90.9	83.7	31.3	7.0	19.2	1,037.5
Total	422.3	311.6	143.8	95.1	89.5	31.6	7.6	20.8	1,122.3
PERSONS									
31 December									
1983	1,108.7	788.2	430.2	257.8	237.5	88.6	20.6	53.6	2,985.2
1984	<u>1,114.5</u>	<u>806.0</u>	<u>434.8</u>	<u>258.4</u>	<u>244.2</u>	<u>91.3</u>	<u>20.3</u>	<u>58.9</u>	<u>3,028.5</u>
30 June(a)									
1985—Financial	1,016.9	757.4	397.1	246.8	223.3	86.9	18.1	56.3	2,802.8
Total	1,148.9	858.5	452.9	273.1	244.5	93.9	21.3	61.2	3,154.2
1986—Financial	1,021.4	805.0	394.1	247.9	233.2	89.7	17.5	61.6	2,870.5
Total	1,148.2	886.4	447.5	268.5	252.2	94.4	21.2	67.7	3,186.2
1987—Financial	1,074.0	794.9	399.6	248.4	228.3	90.8	17.5	55.6	2,909.2
Total	1,205.8	875.7	456.3	270.9	251.7	96.5	20.2	63.1	3,240.1
1988—Financial	1,050.6	795.0	392.4	255.5	236.0	88.0	17.0	54.1	2,888.5
Total	1,179.8	883.5	435.4	277.8	263.2	94.1	19.3	59.9	3,213.0

(a) See paragraph 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series.

TABLE 3. TRADE UNION MEMBERS : PROPORTION OF TOTAL EMPLOYEES(a)
(per cent)

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Aust.</i>
MALES									
31 December									
1983	65	61	59	62	55	68	43	64	61
1984	<u>64</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>66</u>	<u>61</u>
30 June									
1985	67	65	65	65	57	72	44	67	65
1986	66	63	61	63	55	71	40	73	63
1987	66	63	61	66	55	73	36	69	63
1988	61	61	57	63	56	69	38	60	60
FEMALES									
31 December									
1983	52	46	43	46	40	55	33	39	47
1984	<u>48</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>45</u>
30 June									
1985	51	47	39	46	39	51	33	38	46
1986	48	44	41	45	39	47	26	38	44
1987	51	42	44	41	35	44	27	32	44
1988	46	42	40	44	38	47	30	34	43
PERSONS									
31 December									
1983	60	55	53	56	49	63	39	53	56
1984	<u>57</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>62</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>55</u>
30 June									
1985	60	57	55	57	49	64	39	54	57
1986	58	55	53	55	48	61	34	57	55
1987	59	54	54	55	46	61	33	51	55
1988	55	53	50	55	48	60	34	47	53

(a) See paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series.

TABLE 4. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF STATES AND/OR TERRITORIES OF OPERATION, AUSTRALIA(a)

	<i>One</i>	<i>Two</i>	<i>Three</i>	<i>Four</i>	<i>Five</i>	<i>Six or more</i>	<i>Two or more</i>	<i>Total all States</i>
NUMBER OF SEPARATE UNIONS								
31 December								
1983	176	11	5	11	15	101	143	319
1984	<u>186</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>143</u>	<u>329</u>
30 June								
1985	183	8	3	12	15	102	140	323
1986	187	6	3	13	14	103	139	326
1987	r180	r9	r5	r12	13	r97	r136	316
1988	177	6	4	12	16	93	131	308
NUMBER OF MEMBERS (' 000)								
31 December								
1983	531.9	22.9	56.3	132.1	133.6	2,108.5	2,453.3	2,985.2
1984	<u>540.7</u>	<u>23.9</u>	<u>53.7</u>	<u>138.7</u>	<u>143.2</u>	<u>2,128.4</u>	<u>2,487.9</u>	<u>3,028.5</u>
30 June								
1985	541.7	20.9	52.7	142.4	208.7	2,187.7	2,612.5	3,154.2
1986	540.3	20.1	54.4	94.0	179.5	2,297.8	2,645.8	3,186.2
1987	r586.4	23.4	r62.2	r93.4	185.4	r2,289.5	r2,653.9	3,240.1
1988	575.8	18.3	54.8	108.8	218.6	2,236.6	2,637.2	3,213.0

(a) See paragraph 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series.

TABLE 5. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF UNIONS ACCORDING TO SIZE OF UNION, AUSTRALIA(a)

Size of Union (number of members)	Number of unions					30 June 1988		
	31 Dec 1983	31 Dec 1984	30 June 1985	30 June 1986	30 June 1987	Number of unions	Per cent total unions	Cumulative per cent of total unions
Under 100	41	41	35	40	40	37	12.0	12.0
100 and under 250	39	45	42	40	39	32	10.4	22.4
250 and under 500	25	24	30	32	25	31	10.1	32.5
500 and under 1,000	47	52	47	43	45	43	14.0	46.5
1,000 and under 2,000	41	41	41	45	44	45	14.6	61.1
2,000 and under 3,000	}	41	41	39	{	13	3.6	64.7
3,000 and under 5,000						25	8.8	73.5
5,000 and under 10,000	21	22	22	23	21	18	5.8	79.3
10,000 and under 20,000	22	20	21	19	17	19	6.2	85.5
20,000 and under 30,000	13	13	10	12	14	11	3.6	89.1
30,000 and under 40,000	7	6	7	7	6	8	2.6	91.7
40,000 and under 50,000	8	11	10	10	8	8	2.6	94.2
50,000 and under 80,000	5	4	7	8	10	9	2.9	97.1
80,000 and over	9	10	10	8	9	9	2.9	100.0
Total	319	329	323	326	316	308	100.0	

(a) See paragraph 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series.

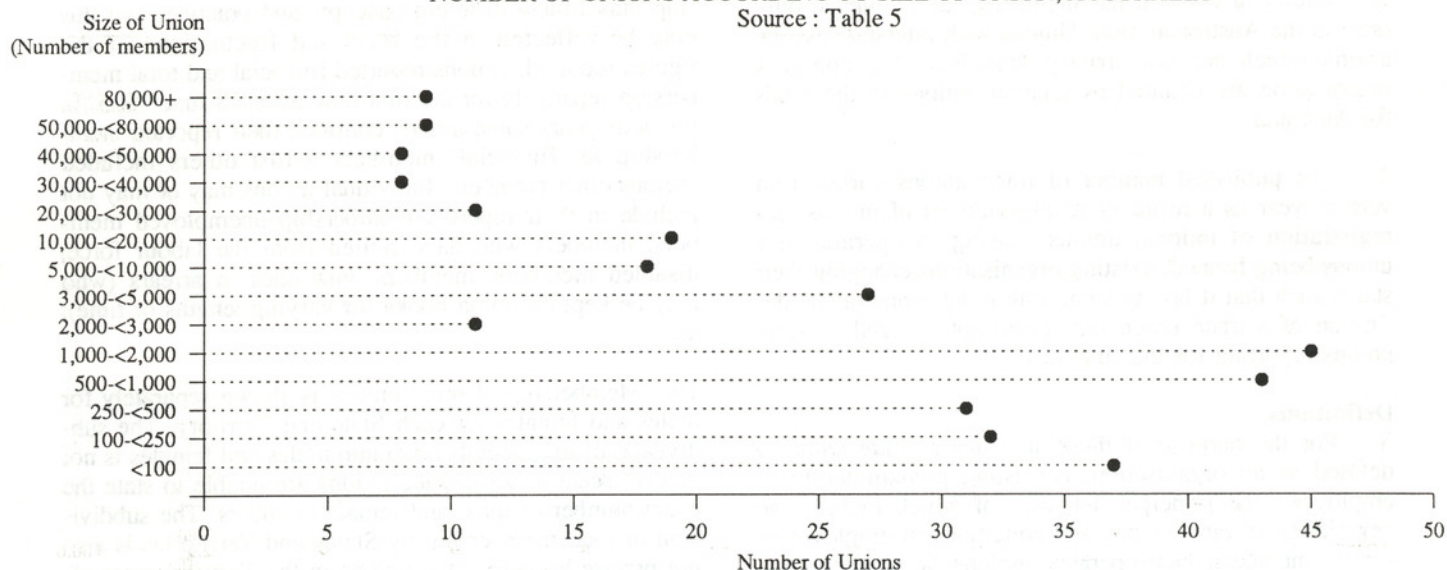
TABLE 6. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF MEMBERS ACCORDING TO SIZE OF UNIONS, AUSTRALIA(a)

							30 June 1988			
		Number of members ('000)								
Size of Union (number of members)		31 Dec 1983	31 Dec 1984	30 June 1985	30 June 1986	30 June 1987	30 June 1988	Average number of members per union	Percent of total members	Cumulative per cent of total membes
Under 100		2.0	2.0	1.7	2.0	1.9	1.7	47	0.1	0.1
100 and under	250	6.0	7.0	6.7	6.6	6.6	5.3	165	0.2	0.2
250 and under	500	8.9	8.4	10.7	11.8	9.1	11.4	369	0.4	0.6
500 and under	1,000	33.9	37.2	33.9	31.1	32.0	30.6	711	1.0	1.5
1,000 and under	2,000	52.7	56.8	56.1	63.0	60.0	65.2	1,449	2.0	3.6
2,000 and under	3,000	} 132.0	127.3	128.9	130.1	{ 31.7	27.8	2,527	0.9	4.4
3,000 and under	5,000									
5,000 and under	10,000	149.3	156.1	149.4	158.8	149.9	131.6	7,310	4.1	11.9
10,000 and under	20,000	328.1	289.5	301.3	275.0	234.4	265.0	13,947	8.2	20.1
20,000 and under	30,000	315.2	307.3	234.8	294.6	338.0	261.1	23,735	8.1	28.2
30,000 and under	40,000	254.7	207.1	242.1	251.3	203.3	277.1	34,636	8.6	36.8
40,000 and under	50,000	363.2	495.7	452.3	455.8	366.5	353.9	44,238	11.0	47.9
50,000 and under	80,000	320.9	244.5	408.6	529.4	618.9	570.5	63,389	17.8	65.6
80,000 and over		1,013.4	1,089.5	1,127.7	976.8	1,085.9	1,104.8	122,751	34.4	100.0
Total		2,985.2	3,028.5	3,154.2	3,186.2	3,240.1	3,213.0	10,432	100.0	

(a) See paragraph 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series.

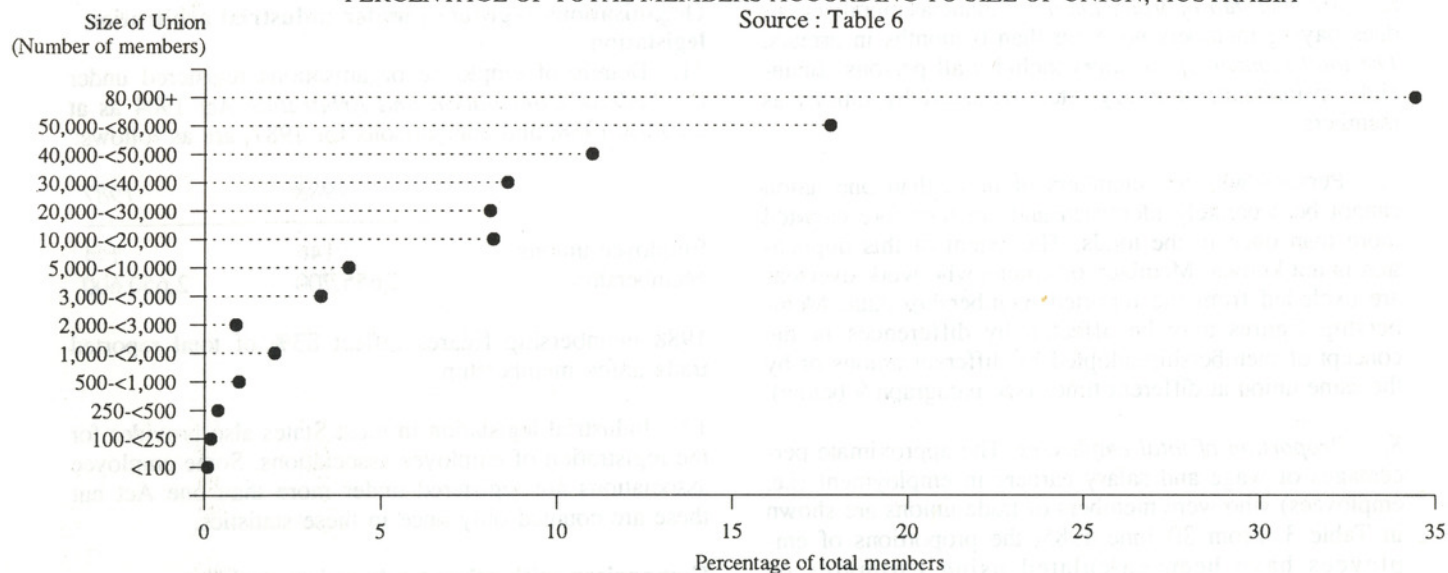
NUMBER OF UNIONS ACCORDING TO SIZE OF UNION, AUSTRALIA

Source : Table 5



PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL MEMBERS ACCORDING TO SIZE OF UNION, AUSTRALIA

Source : Table 6



EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

The statistics in this publication have been compiled from questionnaires completed by individual trade unions in respect of their membership and State of operation as at 30 June 1988. The collection was changed to an end of June basis in 1985. Figures for previous years were collected as at 31 December.

Scope and coverage

2. Current lists of trade unions are maintained by reference to the following sources:

- trade unions registered under the provisions of the various Federal and State industrial arbitration Acts, trade union Acts, etc.

- unions reported to be engaged in conciliation and arbitration proceedings

- reports in trade journals, trade union and employer periodicals, newspapers and other publications.

It should be noted that not all reporting trade unions are registered under industrial arbitration legislation or State trade union Acts.

3. To reduce the possibility of duplication in the statistics of the number of unions and members, where a trade union is a branch of a larger trade union, only the larger organisation is counted. An interstate or federated trade union (i.e. a union with members in more than one State or Territory) is treated as a separate union in each State

or Territory in which it has members, but is counted only once in the Australian total. Unions with interstate associations which are not strictly branches of a common organisation are counted as separate unions in the totals for Australia.

4. The published number of trade unions varies from year to year as a result of amalgamations of unions, de-registration of unions, unions ceasing to operate, new unions being formed, existing organisations changing their status such that it brings them within the scope of the definition of a trade union (see paragraph 5), and existing unions reporting for the first time.

Definitions

5. For the purpose of these statistics a *trade union* is defined as an organisation, consisting predominantly of employees, the principal activities of which include the negotiation of rates of pay and conditions of employment for its members. Non-operating unions or branches, i.e. those with no members at the date of collection, are not included in the statistics.

6. *Membership of trade unions.* Financial members are dues paying members no more than 6 months in arrears. *The total number of members* includes all persons (financial, unfinancial, honorary, etc.) regarded by unions as members.

7. Persons who are members of more than one union cannot be separately identified and are therefore counted more than once in the totals. The extent of this duplication is not known. Members of unions who work overseas are excluded from the reported membership data. Membership figures may be affected by differences in the concept of membership adopted by different unions or by the same union at different times (see paragraph 9 below).

8. *Proportion of total employees.* The approximate percentages of wage and salary earners in employment (i.e. employees) who were members of trade unions are shown in Table 3. From 30 June 1985, the proportions of employees have been calculated using estimates of employees from the ABS Survey of Employment and Earnings. These estimates have been adjusted by adding Labour Force Survey estimates of employees in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting and in private households employing staff. For statistics for periods prior to 30 June 1985, estimates of employees were taken from the *Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0). The percentages shown should be regarded as giving only a broad indication of the extent of union membership among employees, because they are based on estimates of *employed* wage and salary earners; the numbers of union members who were not employed (i.e. were unemployed, retired, etc.) will affect the percentages for a particular year and comparisons over time.

Comparability of series

9. Comparability of figures for different years may be affected by a number of factors. As stated in paragraph 7, there may be duplication in the count of members. This duplication may vary over time. Union rules on member-

ship may follow different concepts and practices and this may be reflected in the level and fluctuations of the figures reported. Unions reported financial and total membership separately for the first time as at 30 June 1985. In previous years some unions confined their reported membership to 'financial' members whilst others included various other members. Individual unions may or may not include in their reported membership unemployed members, members who have retired from the labour force, disabled members, members with dues in arrears (who may be kept on union books for varying lengths of time), etc.

10. Membership of trade unions is shown separately for males and females for each State and Territory. The subdivision of total membership into males and females is not precise because some trade unions are unable to state the exact number of male and female members. The subdivision of total membership by States and Territories is also not precise because some unions in the Territories are affiliated with State organisations and their membership is reported under the heading of that State.

Organisations registered under industrial arbitration legislation

11. Details of employee organisations registered under the *Federal Conciliation and Arbitration Act* 1904 as at 30 June 1988, and comparisons for 1987, are as follows:

	1988	1987
Employee unions	146	144
Membership	2,655,700	2,650,600

1988 membership figures reflect 83% of total reported trade union membership.

12. Industrial legislation in most States also provides for the registration of employee associations. Some employee associations are registered under more than one Act but these are counted only once in these statistics.

Comparison with other trade union statistics

13. Statistics on trade union membership are also collected periodically by the ABS from a sample survey of employees, published in *Trade Union Members, Australia* (6325.0). Statistics from that survey are not directly comparable with trade union census data due to differences in timing and methodology. There are also significant differences in coverage, which are detailed in the explanatory notes to their publication.

Related publications

14. Users may also wish to refer to the following publications:

Industrial Disputes, Australia (6322.0) — issued annually

Industrial Disputes, Australia (6321.0) — issued monthly

Labour Statistics, Australia, 1987 (6101.0)

The Labour Force, Australia, Preliminary (6202.0) — issued monthly

The Labour Force, Australia (6203.0) — issued monthly

Employed Wage and Salary Earners, Australia (6248.0) — issued quarterly

Trade Union Members, Australia, August 1986 (6325.0)

Award Rates of Pay Indexes, Australia (6312.0) — issued monthly

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15. In some cases, the ABS can also make available information which is not published. This information may be made available in one or more of the following forms: microfiche, photocopy, data tape, computer printout, clerically-extracted tabulation. Generally, a charge is made for providing unpublished information. Inquiries should be made to the officer whose name appears in the *Phone Inquiries* section of the inquiries box at the front of this publication, or to Information Services in the nearest ABS office.

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- Break in continuity of series
- r Estimates revised since last issue

17. Where estimates have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

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